

Daily Routine Visual Schedule Builder

Template and best practices for creating visual schedules that build EF skills

Visual schedules externalize executive function. They offload planning and sequencing from a still-developing brain to a visible, consistent structure.

TIME BLOCK	TIME	TASK	VISUAL CUE	DONE?
Wake Up	___:___	Get out of bed, open blinds	Sun icon	[]
Morning Routine	___:___	Bathroom, get dressed, brush teeth	Toothbrush icon	[]
Breakfast	___:___	Eat, clear plate, take vitamins	Plate icon	[]
School Prep	___:___	Pack bag, shoes on, check list	Backpack icon	[]
School/Learning	___:___	School or homeschool block	Book icon	[]
After School	___:___	Snack, free play, homework	Pencil icon	[]
Dinner	___:___	Help set table, eat, help clean	Fork icon	[]
Evening Routine	___:___	Bath, pajamas, reading	Moon icon	[]
Bedtime	___:___	Lights out	Star icon	[]

Visual Schedule Best Practices

- Use pictures or icons for pre-readers, words + icons for early readers – Let the child help choose or draw the icons.
- Post at child's eye level in relevant location – Morning routine in bathroom. After-school routine by the door.
- Include a 'done' mechanism they physically move – Velcro cards they flip, magnets they move, checkboxes they mark.
- Keep it to 5-7 items max per routine block – Too many steps overwhelms. Break long sequences into smaller chunks.
- Add transition warnings between blocks – '5 minutes until we switch.' Transitions are where EF breaks down most.

- Review the schedule together every morning – Pointing to what's coming builds time awareness and reduces anxiety.
- Be consistent for at least 3 weeks before adjusting – Habits take time. Changing the schedule too often defeats the purpose.

Custom Schedule Items for My Child

CONSISTENCY & TRANSITIONS

The goal is to make the schedule the boss -- not you. Instead of 'I need you to brush your teeth,' try 'What does your schedule say is next?' This shifts ownership to the child.